

To the Trustees of
the British Museum

A
L E T T E R

FROM

LORD DE CLIFFORD,

&c.

[Price One Shilling.]

L E T T E R

LORD DE CLIFFORD

[The One Side]

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A Lord de Clifford

L E T T E R

F R O M

LORD DE CLIFFORD,

TO THE WORTHY AND INDEPENDENT

E L E C T O R S

OF THE TOWN OF

DOWNPATRICK.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. DEBRETT, opposite Burlington House,
Piccadilly.—1790.

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Printed by J. G. & J. S. B. at the Press of the

University of London.

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A

LETTER, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN I took the liberty of recommending two friends of mine to you, for your support and protection at the approaching Election, I flattered myself that I should not occasion you much trouble, or that my friends would meet with any opposition ; I was led to entertain this hope, as well from

the character and reputation of the Gentlemen I recommended to you, and from the favourable reception I experienced on my first visit to this county, as from certain letters which I have in my possession, from Lord Downshire to Lady de Clifford, my mother, previous to the last General Election, soliciting the interest of my family to bring Mr. Price into Parliament.

I have already mentioned to you the purport of those letters, and at the same time explained the only meaning which I think they convey ; namely, a positive engagement on the part of Lord Downshire, that Mr. Price should not oppose my interest in Downpatrick, either then or on any future occasion, upon certain conditions therein specified ; which conditions were fulfilled on my part ; and Mr. Price's declaration, in a letter to me, that he considered himself
bound

bound in honour strictly to adhere to whatever terms were made for him, though ever so advantageous to me, and much more injurious to his interest than was intended.

But as the true meaning of those letters has been endeavoured to be explained away, and a most unwarrantable opposition has been set up against my friends, and your wishes, in the borough of Downpatrick, I feel myself under the disagreeable necessity of laying those letters before you and the public, in order to justify my own conduct, and to prove that the assertions I had made, with respect to them, were founded in truth. At the same time, I shall avoid mentioning any particulars, but such as are necessary to form the chain of this correspondence, and to put this matter into the fairest and most candid light.

Having

Having heard a report, in May or June last, that Mr. Price intended to oppose my interest in Downpatrick at the approaching Election, I wrote to him expressing my surprise on hearing such a report, after Lord Downshire had declared, “ his (Mr. Price’s) determination and resolution never to give me any trouble or opposition in the borough of Down ; but on the contrary, to join and support my family interest ;” to which Mr. Price replied to me, by inclosing a letter from Lord Downshire to him, declaring, That “ he (Lord Downshire) never had authority from Mr. Price to enter into such engagements for him, as Lord de Clifford mentioned.”—Upon which I wrote to Mr. Price, inclosing a copy of Lord Downshire’s letter to him, previous to the last General Election, as follows :

Hanover

Hanover Square, June 9, 1781.

“ SIR,

“ I Have seen the Duke of Beaufort and Lord Vernon, and have had the honour to wait on Lady de Clifford. I have acquitted myself of the commission you favoured me with, and I think may venture to acquaint you, that my success has in a great degree answered my wishes and expectations.

“ Lady de Clifford received with pleasure the information I gave her of your desire to see the connection that formerly subsisted between Lord de Clifford’s family and your’s renewed ; and the honourable assurances you enabled me to add of your determination and resolution, never to give Lord de Clifford, or his family, any trouble or opposition in the borough of Down ; but, on the contrary, to join and support his fa-

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mily interest, appeared to give her great satisfaction.

“ I then mentioned your desire to come into Parliament, and particularly by Lord de Clifford’s interest, to whom you have the honour to be related ; and that if your determination should lead her Ladyship and my Lord’s guardians, to recommend you at the next General Election for the borough of Down, you would always consider it as the highest mark of confidence and friendship ; and would be ready, whenever Lord de Clifford should call upon you, to give up your seat to any person whom he should think proper : that although you flattered yourself your honour would not be suspected, you were ready to enter into any engagement, in writing or otherwise, to that effect.

“ Lady de Clifford heard all this with great attention and complacency, and expressed

pressed her satisfaction in the restoration of harmony between the two families, with much personal civility and regard to yourself. She assured me, she had not the most distant suspicion of your honour; but at the same time added, that she was sure I could not be ignorant, that in matters of Election there are certain rules and maxims, from which prudence forbids a departure. As I could not controvert this, I thought it unnecessary to enter further into the subject, but took an opportunity soon after to say, that I apprehended the purport of what had dropt from her, conveyed a negative, with regard to a seat for the borough of Down.

“ She answered, she did not like that word, but that, indeed, she much doubted, whether it would be thought proper for her, and Lord de Clifford’s guardians, to comply with your wish in that respect.

“ As near as I can recollect, this was the purport of the conversation, in regard to the two objects I had in charge from you ; namely, the renewal of your family connection, and your wish to represent Down upon Lord de Clifford's interest. But before I came away, Lady de Clifford said, that as you did not mean to establish and cultivate an interest in Down, separate from, and independent from Lord de Clifford's, but at the same time wished to be in Parliament, she was glad of an opportunity of obliging you ; and therefore, if I thought you would like to come in for the borough of Kinfale, a seat there was at your service. I answered, that so obliging an offer must be received by you with the greatest gratitude ; but that I heard, that Kinfale was a borough open to contest, and that your prudence and situation could not allow of your engaging in the expences of a contested Election ; but that free from
that

that objection, I was sure nothing could make you more happy, than to receive such a favour from her Ladyship. She said she would inquire, but did not apprehend there was any just cause to expect opposition at Kinsale, and desired I would make you this offer. You will please to let me know what answer I shall return.

“ I am, Dear Sir,

“ With great truth, &c. &c.

In a short time afterwards I received the following letter from Mr. Price :

Baginton, June 22, 1789.

“ MY LORD,

“ Yesterday I had the honour to receive your letter, and am really at a loss to find out what expressions I have used, that could
be

construed into the present intention of mine, to give opposition in the town of Down.

“ The copy of the letter you enclosed has astonished me, as I really do not recollect the purport of the original, (which I suppose must have been received) as I entirely left the management of the whole business to Lord Hillsborough. And my conduct being ever superior to designing views, I neither kept originals or copies of any letters that might have passed on that business; and I am also very confident, that it has escaped Lord Hillsborough's memory, the terms that letter seems to convey. I have taken a copy of the copy, and sent it to him this post.

“ * I am a little surpris'd, that your Lordship should so much misconceive a part of
of

* This paragraph alludes to an observation in a letter of mine to Mr. Price, dated June 20, 1789, which

of the letter I enclosed to you, as for a moment to suppose, that Lord Hillsborough meant, by what he writes, that your interest would decrease on being known ; as I read that part of the letter, it means directly the reverse, and which I am sure he intended should be the construction, and which I think is very evident.

which is as follows:—I must add, that from the little knowledge my Lord Hillsborough has of me, I am at a loss to account for his reason for supposing, that when I am more known and connected with the country, the interest I now have there will alter. This observation was made upon a passage in a letter of Lord Downshire's to Mr. Price, dated June 6, 1789, which letter Mr. Price enclosed to me on the 9th of the same month. The passage in Lord Downshire's letter is as follows :

“ I know the strength that will appear on each side, when Lord de Clifford comes to be more known and connected with this country, and you should think fit to exert that affection and regard, which is so deservedly and generally possessed by you in our country.”

“ I con-

“ I consider myself bound in honour strictly to adhere to whatever terms were made for me, though ever so advantageous for your Lordship, and much more injurious to my interest than was intended. And having acted towards you with unremitting honour, I think myself entitled to renew my request, and hope you will give me an answer as soon as you conveniently can. Already and repeatedly I have declared my wish for the preservation of harmony now subsisting between us.

“ I have the honour to be

“ Your obedient humble servant,

“ C. PRICE.”

Upon acquainting Mr. Price that I could not bring him into Parliament at the next General Election, I received a letter from
2 him,

him, informing me, that he was determined to stand for the borough of Downpatrick himself. In some short time after, looking over my papers, I found the two following letters, from Lord Downshire to Lady de Clifford, on the same subject, and immediately prevailed on Mr. W. Rowley to wait upon Lord Downshire with copies of them, as follows :

Hanover Square, July 9, 1781.

“ MADAM,

“ I find Mr. Price has been before-hand with me in writing to your Ladyship, and has, I presume, told you how happy your very kind offer to bring him in for Kinsale makes him. He tells me he prefers it to Down, though he thinks he might, perhaps,

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be more useful to your Ladyship's family by being one of Lord de Clifford's Members for that place. He authorises me to assure you, that he has not, nor will have any interest there, but what shall always be at Lord de Clifford's disposal. In this declaration, I venture to answer for him. I am sure he is a young man of strict honour, in whom your Ladyship may most safely confide. I understand, in case of Vesey's death, he hopes your Ladyship will chuse him for Kinsale directly. I presume you will, for it will tend to secure matters at the General Election. I request your Ladyship's forgiveness, for interfering so far in business, in which I can be no otherwise concerned, than by wishes to see every thing in the part of the world I belong to, in which Lord de Clifford's family is interested; go on to your Ladyship's entire satisfaction; and I have

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have very great pleasure in foreseeing that it will be the case.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ With the greatest respect,

“ MADAM,

“ Your most obedient, and

“ Most humble Servant,

“ HILLSBOROUGH.”

The second letter as follows :

Hanover Square, July 14, 1781.

“ MADAM,

“ I Have received the honour of your Ladyship's letter of the 12th instant, and am happy that the result of my negociation is agreeable to you. Your Ladyship has made Mr. Price very much so, and you

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have,

have, I trust, secured peace and quiet at Down to Lord de Clifford, and an attached friend, who will be ever ready to obey and assist him. I will not fail to take all the care in my power to procure the Government interest for your Ladyship's friends at Kinfale.

“ And have the honour to be,

“ With the sincerest respect,

“ MADAM,

“ Your Ladyship's most humble and

“ Most obedient Servant,

“ HILLSBOROUGH.”

Upon Mr. Wm. Rowley's reading the above letters to my Lord Downshire, he seemed very much astonished—read them himself, and said, he had not the least recollection of the transaction.—Mr. Rowley then called upon his Lordship, in my name,

to

to make good his part of the engagement—observed, that I had fulfilled my part, and called upon him, as a man of honour, to perform his.

Lord Downshire said, that he never could have entered into such an engagement, so injurious to Mr. Price's interest, and so absurd; and added, that he would not at all interfere in the business. Mr. Wm. Rowley upon this went away, but soon after received a note from Lord Downshire, desiring to see him the next day. Mr. Wm. Rowley accordingly waited upon him, when his Lordship again declared his determination not to interfere; but asked Mr. Wm. Rowley whether he had shewn these letters to Mr. Price; Mr. Wm. Rowley replied, that he had not, but would take the first opportunity of doing so. Accordingly he shewed the letters to Mr. Price the next day, and
called

called upon Mr. Price to fulfil the engagements contained in them. Mr. Price declared, that he knew nothing of the letters, but would do whatever Lord Downshire directed. Mr. Price, at the same time, expressed a wish, that Lord Downshire should see the originals of these two letters ; upon advice of which, I immediately came up from Downpatrick to Dublin, and waited on his Lordship, with two friends of mine, his Lordship also having three friends present ; I produced the originals of the two letters last above recited, which he acknowledged to be his hand-writing, and also acknowledged, that he must have wrote the original of the first letter herein before recited.

Mr. Price being also present, was appealed to, who again declared he was ready to do whatever Lord Downshire directed ; but

Lord Downshire, notwithstanding his own letters then lay before him, said that he would not interfere. I then told his Lordship, that if he was determined not to put a stop to this opposition, I should be under the necessity, though at the same time very unwillingly, to publish those letters, in order to justify my own character, and to satisfy my friends and the world, that what I had asserted, with respect to them, was founded in truth.

You will please to observe, Gentlemen, that in reciting this transaction, I have carefully avoided making any comment whatever upon these letters. You will judge yourselves of their true meaning and intent—Whether they contain the positive engagement, which I have asserted they did—Whether Those, who acted for me at the last General Election, acquitted themselves with honour,

honour, and fulfilled the conditions required on my part—And, whether Lord Downshire and Mr. Price are warranted in the opposition they have set up to my friends in Downpatrick, on the present occasion.

I cannot conclude, Gentlemen, without expressing my warmest acknowledgements to you, for the very kind and honourable support you have given my friends, whom I recommend to your protection, and who, I hope, will prove worthy of your choice. The very flattering instances of politeness and regard which you have shewn me, since my arrival in Downpatrick, will remain indelibly impressed on my heart; and I beg leave to assure you, that in all situations, the real interest and prosperity of the town of Downpatrick, shall be
the

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the constant and peculiar object of my
care.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ With the highest respect and esteem,

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ Your most obliged, and

“ Most faithful humble Servant,

“ De CLIFFORD.”

F I N I S.



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